

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 21304 01 OF 02 061544Z
ACTION EUR-12

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P 061529Z SEP 78

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6458
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 21304

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, UR, GR
SUBJECT: FIRST REPORTS ON GREEK FON. MIN. VISIT TO
SOVIET UNION

REF: ATHENS 7700 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. FIRST FULL DAY OF
GREEK FON. MIN. RALLIS' VISIT IS FULL ONE. HE
HAS "BUSINESS-LIKE, FRIENDLY" MEETINGS WITH KOSYGIN
AND MIN. CULTURE DEMICHEV. FORMER EXTENDS INVITATION
TO CARAMANLIS TO VISIT SOVIET UNION. NO DETAILS
ARE AVAILABLE AS YET OF GROMYKO-RALLIS TALKS.
IN LUNCHEON SPEECH, GROMYKO NOTES BILATERAL ECO-
NOMIC AND CULTURAL PROGRESS, BUT EMPHASIZES NEED
TO MOVE AHEAD IN AREA OF POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP.
IN HIS REMARKS, GROMYKO IS CAUTIOUS ON CYPRUS
AND TOUGH ON SEPARATE M.E. TALKS (I.E., CAMP DAVID
MEETING). RALLIS IN RETURN CIRCUMSPECTLY NOTES
THAT DIFFERENCES IN SOVIET AND GREEK SYSTEMS DO
NOT HINDER DEVELOPMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS IN
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 21304 01 OF 02 061544Z

"ALL" AREAS -- POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND
OTHERS. HE CONCLUDES WITH CURIOUS STATEMENT THAT
DESIRE TO IMPROVE BILATERAL RELATIONS IS NOT ONLY
THE WISH OF GREEK GOVERNMENT BUT IS BASED ON "WILL
OF GRREK PEOPLE AND OF POLITICAL FORCES" WHICH
REPRESENT THEM. END SUMMARY.

1. SEPT. 6 PRAVDA CARRIES FIRST DETAILS OF GREEK FON. MIN.'S VISIT TO SOVIET UNION. BRIEF TASS REPORT ON SEPT. 5 MEETING WITH KOSYGIN NOTES "BUSINESS-LIKE, FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE" SURROUNDING "EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS" WHICH TOOK PLACE. RALLIS GAVE KOSYGIN LETTER FROM CARAMANLIS AND, AS PREDICTED (REFTEL), KOSYGIN EXTENDED INVITATION TO CARAMANLIS TO VISIT SOVIET UNION. EVEN SHORTER REPORT ON MEETING WITH MIN. CULTURE DEMICHEV NOTES SAME "BUSINESS-LIKE AND FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE" AND SAYS THAT QUESTIONS WERE DISCUSSED OF FURTHER WIDENING AND STRENGTHENING OF COOPERATION IN AREAS OF CULTURE AND ART.

2. OF MORE INTEREST IS TASS ACCOUNT OF GROMYKO-RALLIS TALKS AND EXCHANGE OF LUNCHEON SPEECHES. NO DETAILS ARE GIVEN OF TALKS WHICH ARE SAID TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN "FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE" AND TO HAVE CONSISTED OF "EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS" ON CURRENT AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS ESPECIALLY IN AREA OF POLITICAL TIES.

3. ASSUME DEPT. HAS TASS REPORT OF LUNCHEON SPEECHES (REPORT APPEARS TO BE SOMEWHAT ABRIDGED). MAJOR POINTS OF TWO SPEAKERS' REMARKS INCLUDE:

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 21304 01 OF 02 061544Z

A) GROMYKO

-- NOTED STRENGTH OF DETENTE "DESPITE PERSISTENT EFFORTS OF CERTAIN FORCES" TO RETURN WORLD TO STATE OF TENSION;

-- DESCRIBED MOVEMENT IN AREAS OF TRADE, SCIENTIFIC-TECHNICAL COOPERATION, SHIPPING, CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC TIES, BUT EMPHASIZED NEED TO DO MORE IN AREA OF "POLITICAL RELATIONS";

-- SAID SOVIET UNION WAS READY - ON A MUTUAL BASIS - TO LIMIT OR TO BAN ANY SORT OF WEAPONS TO LIMIT THE ARMS RACE. SOVIET MEDITERRANEAN PROPOSAL WAS PUT IN THIS CONTEXT;

-- STATED NEED TO ELIMINATE HOT SPOTS OF TENSION AROUND CYPRUS AND IN M.E. ON FORMER, GROMYKO SAID ONLY THAT IT WAS NO SECRET THAT SOURCE OF TENSION IS "INTERFERENCE FROM OUTSIDE" AND THAT SOVIET UNION WAS READY TO COOPERATE TO SOLVE PROBLEM. ON M.E. GROMYKO DELIVERED IMPLICIT BUT STRONG CRITICISM

OF SEPARATE TALKS AND OF "SEPARATE DEAL BEHIND BACK
OF ARAB PEOPLE" (READ CAMP DAVID MEETING). SUCH
A POLICY, SAID GROMYKO, IS "UNREALISTIC, SHORT-
SIGHTED, AND IN THE END, HOPELESS."

B) RALLIS

-- EMPHASIZED DIFFERENCES IN GREEK AND SOVIET
SYSTEMS, BUT ADDED THAT THESE DID NOT HINDER
DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 21304 02 OF 02 061554Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 21304

IN "ALL" AREAS - "POLITICAL,
ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, AND OTHERS." GREEKS, HE SAID,
WERE PREPARED TO STUDY ALL SOVIET PROPOSALS WITHOUT
PREJUDICE;

-- NOTED IMPORTANCE IN THIS CONTEXT OF UN CHARTER,
HELSINKI FINAL ACT AND PRINCIPLES OF NON-INTERFERENCE
IN ONE ANOTHER'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS. STRICT
APPLICATION OF UN DECISIONS, HE SAID, WOULD CON-
TRIBUTE TO ELIMINATION OF HOT SPOTS OF TENSION -
INCLUDING CYPRUS PROBLEM;

-- LISTED EXAMPLES OF PREVIOUS BILATERAL CONTACTS
AND AGREEMENTS DURING PAST FOUR YEARS AND STATED
THAT CONSULAR CONVENTION AND CULTURAL AGREEMENT
WOULD BE SIGNED SEPT. 6. OTHER FUTURE AGREEMENTS,
HE SAID, WERE BEING STUDIED;

-- CONCLUDED WITH DECLARATION THAT GREEK DESIRE
TO DEVELOP RELATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION WAS NOT
HAPPENSTANCE. IT WAS NOT ONLY DESIRE OF GREEK
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 21304 02 OF 02 061554Z

GOVERNMENT, HE SAID, BUT WAS BASED ON "WILL OF
GREEK PEOPLE AND OF POLITICAL FORCES" WHICH REP-
RESENT THEM. END UNCLASSIFIED.

3. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. COMMENT: LEVEL OF MEDIA
ATTENTION PAID TO RALLIS SEEMS TO BE NORMAL AS DOES
LEVEL OF POLITICAL REPRESENTATION ON SOVIET SIDE.
GROMYKO DID NOT SPELL OUT EXACTLY WHAT HE MEANT BY
HIS CLEAR EMPHASIS ON THE NEED TO MOVE BEYOND THE
"TECHNICAL" LEVEL OF THE PRESENT RELATIONSHIP ON
TO A BROADER "POLITICAL" LEVEL OF SOME SORT. THE
IDEA OF PERIODIC, POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS COMES TO
MIND AS DOES THE SIGNING OF SOMETHING LIKE THE
U.S.-SOVIET "BASIC PRINCIPLES OF RELATIONS" OR
THE TURKISH-SOVIET "POLITICAL DOCUMENT." WHATEVER
GROMYKO HAD IN MIND, HOWEVER, THE GREEK EMBASSY
TOLD US LAST WEEK THAT NO MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS WERE
EXPECTED DURING THIS VISIT AND THAT THE ONLY AGREE-
MENTS TO BE SIGNED WOULD BE THE CONSULAR CONVENTION
(INCLUDING THE OPENING OF CONSULATES GENERAL IN
ODESSA AND SALONIKA), AND AGREEMENTS ON CULTURAL
AND TECHNICAL EXCHANGES. GARRISON

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